

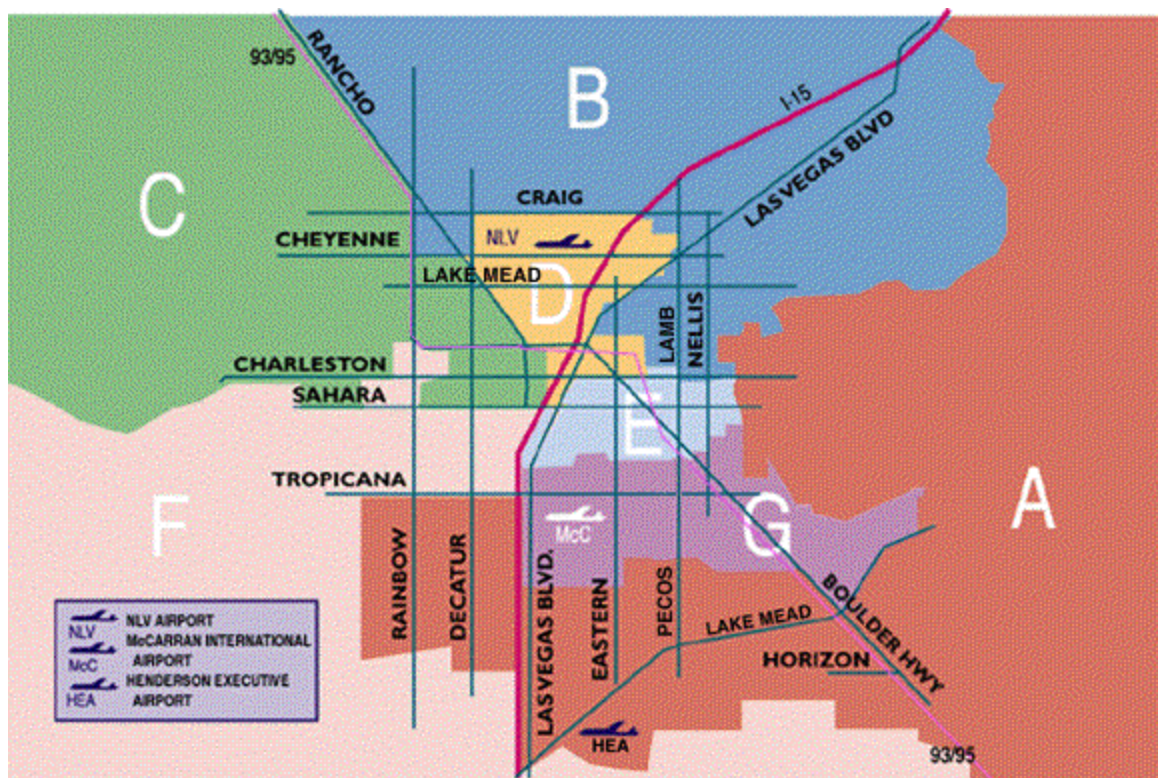
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

City of Las Vegas

Profile of Drug Indicators

July 1999



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Las Vegas, Nevada

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

Las Vegas, Nevada Metropolitan Statistical Area, 1990 Census

{PRIVATE}	
Subject	Number
Total population	741,459
SEX	
Male	376,108
Female	365,351
AGE	
Under 18 years	181,809
18 to 20 years	29,995
21 to 24 years	45,685
25 to 44 years	254,542
45 to 54 years	84,077
55 to 59 years	34,195
60 to 64 years	33,478
65 years and over	77,678
RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN	
White	602,658
Black	70,738
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	6,416
Asian or Pacific Islander	26,043
Other race	35,604
Hispanic origin (of any race)	82,904
ECONOMIC	
Population Below Poverty Level	76,737

Politics²

- Mayor: Oscar Goodman
- Clark County District Attorney: Stewart L. Bell
- Sheriff Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department: Jerry Keller

Programs/Initiatives

- Cops Racing Against Violence Through Education (CRAVE) is a program run by the Las Vegas Police Department. The program involves officers racing motorcycles at Las Vegas racetracks, they also teach driver education and DUI awareness, and they take neighborhood kids on summer field trips, and give away scholarships.³

- The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's 1st Tuesday program provides an opportunity for the citizenry of Las Vegas to get involved with their police department. The first Tuesday of every month the police open the doors to their substations from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in order for the community to have an open forum of communication with the police officers that patrol their neighborhoods. Each month a different area of the department is highlighted, so the community can get a better idea of what goes on "behind the scenes" throughout the different sections of the department.³
- The Citizens' Police Academy (CPA) is a ten-week program which gives community members first-hand information on the role of police officers in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD). Building a partnership between the police department and the community, giving citizens first-hand information on how and why the Department operates, and examining the culture of police work and the organization are goals of the CPA.³
- The Las Vegas initiative was founded in 1992 as a recognized Weed and Seed site, but it was not funded in Meadows Village until 1994. The Meadows Village target area is 14 blocks bounded on all sides by commercial development. The population is approximately 5,000 with 44.4 percent of residents being foreign born. The unemployment rate is 13.9 percent for males and 15.4 percent for females. The median family income is \$15,931 and over 28 percent of all families live below the poverty level. There is a large population of undocumented immigrants and 51.7 percent of residents speak a language other than English. Of the people over 25, 54 percent are not high school graduates and 28 percent of those 25 and older have less than a 9th grade education. Major problems facing the community (per a resident survey) were crime, educational needs, medical services, economic opportunities, capital community improvements and social services. The West Las Vegas site has a population of 15,629 with 78.23 percent Black, 16.37 percent Caucasian, .76 percent American Indian, .49 percent Asian and 4.15 percent other. The unemployment rate is 16.9 percent; income ranges between \$8,158 to \$23,065. Some milestones for the Las Vegas initiative include: reducing the percentage of the population who do not speak English, increasing resident immigration services, establishing naturalization classes, increasing employment rate and job training of installing/modifying a computerized system (ServiceLink) in the Safe Haven, eliminating the waiting list for parent education classes, placement programs, mentor programs, recreational programs, airing of radio coverage of Weed and Seed efforts, establishing neighborhood associations and Adopt Your Block strategies. Law enforcement strategies included sweeps that removed open-air drug markets, identification of known dealers and crack houses, and an increase in police/community interaction. Community hotlines, the bike patrols, Citizen's Police Academy, and community watch programs are all key in the success of community policing.⁴

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- The crime index total in Las Vegas fell from 30,412 in the first half of 1997 to 27,116 in the first half of 1998.⁵

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Las Vegas 1997-1998

Offense	1997*	1998*
Crime Index Total	30,412	27,116
Murder	58	51
Forcible Rape	321	256
Robbery	1,782	1,653
Aggravated Assault	2,365	1,609
Burglary	6,524	5,843
Larceny-Theft	14,741	12,255
Motor Vehicle Theft	4,621	5,449
Arson	201	184

* January-June 1997-1998

- In Las Vegas, Nevada 56.8% of male arrestees and 70.3% of female arrestees tested positive for drugs during 1998.⁶

Percent Positive for Drugs, By Offense Category, Las Vegas 1998

Offense Category	Cocaine		Marijuana		Meth.		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	10.0	0	31.4	20.0	7.1	0	42.9	40.0
Property	39.5	33.3	18.4	33.3	10.5	0	63.2	66.7
Drug	38.2	35.7	35.3	28.6	19.1	35.7	77.9	85.7
Other	17.6	46.7	22.9	13.3	15.9	26.7	51.2	66.7
Total	24.2	35.1	25.8	21.6	13.8	24.3	56.8	70.3

- During 1998, in Las Vegas 14.7% of male arrestees and 32.4% of female arrestees reported using crack in the last 30 days before their arrest.⁶

Percent of Arrestees Reporting Drug Use
in the Last 30 Days, Las Vegas 1998

Drug	Male	Female
Crack	14.7	32.4
Cocaine	8.4	18.9
Crack and Cocaine	2.9	10.8
Marijuana and Cocaine	5.7	13.5
Opiates and Cocaine	1.6	5.4
Any 2 or More Drugs	27.6	40.5

- The mean age that male and female arrestees first reported using marijuana was 15.3.

Characteristics of Las Vegas Arrestees, 1998⁶

Category	Male	Female
AGE OF FIRST USE		
Alcohol	14.2	15.5
Crack	26.1	25.2
Cocaine	20.0	19.2
Marijuana	15.3	15.3
Opiates	22.5	22.9
Methamphetamine	21.9	22.2
PCP	17.8	19.0
PRIOR TREATMENT		
Alcohol	16.7%	13.5%
Crack	7.6%	5.4%
Cocaine	3.9%	13.5%
Marijuana	6.0%	10.8%
Opiates	2.1%	2.7%
Methamphetamine	5.8%	10.8%
INJECTED ILLEGAL DRUGS		
Cocaine	9.4%	10.8%
Heroin	8.6%	13.5%
Methamphetamine	8.9%	10.8%

- Gang membership, in Las Vegas Area rose from 5,805 to 6,232, an increase of 13.4%. However, the change in the rate-of-increase of gang membership over the previous period (1996-1997) was only 1.2 percent. This may be an indication that gang membership is leveling off for the short term. In 1998 a portion of this documented group consisted of members who were visiting, doing gang business in, or are otherwise transient to Las Vegas, and consequently, contribute to the overall membership increase. The number of persons found in association with gang members rose from 2,343 to 2,580, an increase of 9.1 percent. The change in the rate of increase over the previous period (1996-1997) was minus 3.3 percent. Drive-by shooting statistics are the traditional benchmark used to measure gang violence in a community and were down 29 percent in 1998 despite the increase in gang membership. The number of victims fell to 66 from 93, the same percentage as the drop in shootings themselves. The numbers of victims from other types of gang shootings are also down, from 77 to 27. The number of gang members who were killed or who took their own lives was 20, down 43 percent from 1997.³

Gang Statistics, Las Vegas 1994-98³

{PRIVATE}	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994
GANGS	179	167	159	146	119
GANG MEMBERS	6232	5805	5098	4263	3508
GANG ASSOCIATES	2580	2343	2051	1623	1387
DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS	196	276	327	527	433
DRIVE-BY SHOOTING VICTIMS	66	93	140	119	unk
NON DRIVE-BY SHOOTING VICTIMS	27	77	unk	unk	unk
DEAD GANG MEMBERS	22	35	45	24	20
HOMICIDES *	19	32	39	18	12
SUICIDES	1	3	3	6	7
DEATHS OTHER (Police shootings/ traffic)	2	0	3	0	1

* Homicides of gang members, not gang-related homicides.

Drugs

- The number of drug-related deaths that occurred in Las Vegas, Nevada increased 22.3% from 121 in 1995 to 148 in 1996⁷

Drug Abuse Deaths in Las Vegas, 1995-96

Selected Characteristics	1995	1996
Total drug-abuse episodes	121	148
GENDER		
Male	95	116
Female	25	32
RACE/ETHNICITY		
White	91	122
Black	19	14
Hispanic	9	11
Other	2	1
AGE		
6-17	1	1
18-25	9	17
26-34	29	32
35 and up	70	85
Unknown	12	13
SELECTED DRUGS		
Alcohol-in-comb	46	52
Cocaine	59	68
Heroin/Morphine	36	55
Marijuana/Hashish	0	2
Methadone	2	7
Methamphetamine	47	50
PCP	4	1
Total Drug Mentions	272	357

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² Las Vegas Web site: <http://www.ci.las-vegas.nv.us/>

³ Las Vegas Police Department Web site: <http://www.lvmpd.com/>

⁴ Executive Office of Weed and Seed Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows.htm>

⁵ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, January-June 1998*, December 1998

⁶ National Institute of Justice, 1998 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees, April 1999

⁷ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Drug Abuse Warning Network - Annual Medical Examiner Data 1996*, July 1998

This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#) For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues contact:

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